GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3288
ANSWERED ON:18.12.2015
CAS/DAS
Puttaraju Shri C.S.

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any policy in the distribution and sale of Conditional Access System (CAS) and Digital Addressable System (DAS) in the country and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the steps taken by the Government in providing equal and adequate opportunity for all the players providing CAS and DAS and also to avoid monopoly in this field;

(c) whether the Government has evaluated the quantum of business in terms of customer base and revenue generation;

(d) if so, the total customer base and revenue generation expected annually through the CAS and DAS sale and distribution; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to curb and stop resale of CAS and DAS licences?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING {COL RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE (Retd.)}

(a) Ministry had introduced Conditional Access System (CAS) in the Cable TV Network in four metro cities, namely, Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai in the year 2006. In this system, the pay channels had to be encrypted using Conditional Access Software for distribution on the Cable Network. However, Free to Air (FTA) channels could still be provided in analogue. CAS system was not found very successful since pay channels were also reported to be carried in analogue mode sometime by some cable operators. Therefore, as per the recommendations of TRAI it has been replaced by Digital Addressable System (DAS). As per Gazette Notification dated 11.11.2011 DAS in Cable Television Network is required to be implemented in four phases across the country. Phase I (four metro cities i.e Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Chennai)and Phase II (38 cities having population of more than one million) have since been implemented and Phase III (all the urban areas not covered in Phase I and Phase II) is to be completed by 31st Dec 2015 and Phase IV (Rest of India) by 31st Dec 2016.

Conditional Access Software is required both in the cases of CAS as well as DAS system. Cable Operators use Conditional Access Software in the Headend to encrypt the channels while distributing and this software in the Set Top Box allows the subscriber to view the channels by decryption, only if the subscriber has been authorized by the cable operators.

(b): For transmission of signals under CAS as well as DAS, the Multi System Operators (MSOs) are required to obtain registration from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting whereas Local Cable Operators (LCOs) continue to get registration from respective Head Post Offices of their areas. The applicant can be an individual, a partnership firm or a company registered under the Company's Act. Also, the applicant should not be an un-discharged insolvent, a person of unsound mind and convicted of any criminal offence. An applicant can seek registration for operation in one or more areas. Therefore, the eligibility conditions are not only simple but also provide equal and adequate opportunity to all the applicants. Thus, it does not lead to monopoly.

(c) & (d): Government has not carried out any such study. However, as per FICCI KPMG Report 2015 there are 168 million TV households in the country of which 99 million are cable TV subscribers.

(e): The MSO registrations for transmission under CAS as well as DAS are non-transferable as per terms & conditions stipulated in the order of registration issued to Multi System Operators. Therefore, question of its resale does not arise.

****